The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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ODE TO DUTY.

Stern daughter of the voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring and reprove;
Thou, who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth.
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Long may the kindly impulse last!
But thou, if they should totter, teach them to stand fast!

Serene will be our days, and bright,
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold,
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed,
Yet find that other strength, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried;
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust.
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control;
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face.
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads.
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh, let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live.

—*Wordsworth.*

MY FATHER'S BUSINESS.

Observe what he says himself of himself. "If any man will not hear my words, I judge him not." But let any man see the things I do, they testify of me. "And many shall say to me, Lord, Lord, have we not testified in thy name? And I shall say, I never

knew you." But those whom he does recognize, and does receive, for whom the kingdom is prepared, are those who fed the hungry and clothed the naked and visited the prisons.

For you and me, we are to try to remember that first, last, and always religion means nearness to God and the goodness which follows. It does not mean knowledge nor wisdom nor any intellectual process quick, deep, or strong. "This is what the Lord thy God requires of thee: to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Of his Son, the Lord of mankind, the elder brother of our inheritance, we are to remember that he went about doing good. Christianity, if we care for that name, is a moral movement controlling the life of the world. It is not an intellectual system, controlling men's thinking or their philosophy.

Let me go back again to the young gentleman of Edom, who had great possessions. I was speaking of him here the other day, as perhaps at the court of one of the younger Herods. He has no name. He turned away sorrowful. That is the last we hear of him. He is one of the most pathetic characters in the New Testament. The whole of Jesus' talk with him is aimed to show him that he is to live for others, for mankind. "What shall I do to inherit life?" Poor fellow, he was so bored with the oxen and the sheep, with the steward's accounts, and the herdsman's complaints! Great possessions, forsooth! What were the possessions, if life were dying out of him; each day more stupid than the day before? And, undoubtedly, this man thought as the doctors of divinity think, that such a disease is to be cured by doctoring. "Master, what is the prescription? Give me a recipe for life—so many ounces of elixir."

"Dear boy, life is what you cannot buy. Life comes when you begin to live. Get rid of these possessions which hang round your neck so heavily, and come and follow me. Make children happy; make lepers start to new life. Bring Zacchæus, the publican, and the fisherman John into loving and glad intimacy. I am going about doing good, and I have life enough. Follow me, and go about doing good, and you will have life,—life infinite, life everlasting."

I do not know his name. But I think, when he thought it over, he left his possessions, and followed. He talked it over with Matthew some day, and said, "This is what he said; but all you must tell of me is that that day I was so blind that I went away sorrowing."

And we acknowledge this in our more sane moments. Thus I read "Uncle Tom's Cabin." I see and I say that the fugitive slave who gives the book its name is a Christian through and through. He lives in God and moves in God, and in God has his being. He risks his life for others. He forgives those who have persecuted him and used him spitefully. Here is, indeed,—I say, when I lay the book down,—a model and example. This ignorant black man, who cannot read or write, who makes endless mistakes about the Bible and understands nothing about my theologies, he follows Christ.

Do not let me turn away, to discuss the origin of the Pentateuch or the doctrine of election, as if these things had any other interest than the botany of the south pole has, or the genealogy of the Bourbon kings. Men show that they are Christians when their convention takes care of the unemployed, when it provides daily bread, when they "go about doing good."

One use, at least, of the visible symbol of the Last Supper is that we may come back to simple notions of what we mean when we speak the words "Christianity" and "religion." For thirty years after he died—not more, alas!—the apostles called it *The Way*. It was the way to live. They did not talk of the doctrine. They talked of following. They believed in living. They fed the hungry. They clothed the naked. They mended their clothes when they were ragged. If a man were houseless, they gave him a home. If a man were desperate, they brought him closer to God. To all men they showed the glad tidings of God at hand and of heaven here. And to quicken those to whom they spoke, and to give reality to what they said, they told the stories of Him whose highest title was that he went about doing good. Indeed, this was what made it certain that he was the Son of God, well-beloved. And he,—willing to be despised, willing to be rejected by those who knew him not,—he was eager to be thus remembered by those who knew him.

Here is the central wish, in the words of this table:—

"Do this in memory of me."
"Who gives a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple shall not lose his reward."
"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one for another."

Edward E. Hale.

THE STILL HOUR.

INCREASE OUR FAITH.

Wherefore, Lord, abides no might
In these faltering hands of ours?
Wherefore, 'neath each burden light,
Sink our hearts and fail our powers?
Wherefore turn our tired feet
From the road that seemed so sweet?

Wherefore do our sorrows cleave?
Wherefore do our eyes o'erflow?
Lord! in thee we half believe:
Faith's full life we do not know.
Faith's bright fire burns not in us:
Hence we weep and falter thus.

Doth the world our hearts still win?
Doth the Tempter still deceive?
Over each fresh wound of sin
Doth the tender Spirit grieve?
Lord! we dwell in unbelief:
Hence our sin, and hence his grief!

Wherefore do we yield to fear?
Wherefore turn we tremblers back?
With the heavenly Helper near,
What true soul can courage lack?
Lord! we scarce believe in thee:
Hence our lack of valiancy.

Wherefore are no mountains moved?
Wherefore are no marvels wrought?
Have we not been dearly loved?
Have we not been dearly bought?
Lord! the power of faith we want:
Therefore is our service scant.

In thy mighty men of old
All the might of faith appeared.
Lord! they were divinely bold:
Thee, and thee alone, they feared.
Strongly did their hearts believe,
Greatly did their hands achieve.

Lord! more faith we weaklings want;
Lord! for faith we tremblers sigh;
Lord! for faith we mourners pant;
Lord! for faith we sinners cry.
With this grace each grace let fall.
Give this gift, and give us all.

Turn our darkness into light,
Give us valiancy for fear,
Raise our weakness into might,
Lift our sadness into cheer.
Make us through the strength of faith
Strong o'er sorrow, sin, and death!

—T. H. Gill.

The only faith which saves us is that which enables us to save others. And this faith is to believe that God is always ready to give us the power to do anything which ought to be done. If there is a woe, a wrong, a sin to be removed, then God has given us the power with which to do it. If we can believe this, we shall never be afraid.

This is a very simple test of genuine faith in Christ. If you have faith enough in Jesus as the Christ of God to enable you to undertake his work of saving your fellow-men from sin and misery here and hereafter, you may be sure you have the true faith.

But, if you have not the courage to do this work, then, though you preach faith in Christ as the Omnipotent God, and utter that doctrine with the tongue of men and angels, yet you prove by your own cowardice in the presence of evil that you have no real faith in him as an actual Saviour of actual men and women.

Do you know of any case of vice or sorrow which it seems almost impossible to relieve or cure? Go and see if God will not work a miracle through your mind and heart, giving your actions and words a power not their own, so that you can make the blind see, the lame walk, and raise up the dead. You must go in faith, however, trusting entirely that, if the thing ought to be done, God will give you strength to do it. You must go also in the spirit of prayer,—not, necessarily, with the prayer of words, but with that essential prayer which consists in keeping one's self in a condition of faith and hope, leaning on God.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

Faith not only leads to work, but the effort to work leads to faith. Always the deepest religious experience is born of the strongest moral purpose.— J. F. C.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

THE DAY AFTER THE TRANSFIGURATION: HEALING THE EPILEPTIC BOY.

The other disciples, who did not accompany Jesus to the Mount of Transfiguration with Peter, James, and John, seem to have been left at or near Dalmanutha. In the absence of Jesus, they were probably appealed to by those who came to ask Jesus to heal their sick friends, and were disappointed not to find him. Some of the Pharisees, who had asked Jesus for a sign, a short time before,—or others like them,—may have vexed the disciples, by questions or by contemptuous reference to the refusal of Jesus (Mark viii. 12). It is, however, "scribes" who are mentioned as "questioning with" the disciples (Mark ix. 14).

The disciples had, at any rate, made an attempt to heal a boy whose symptoms seem to indicate a severe form of epilepsy (perhaps insanity), and had not been successful. What means they used are not described; but they probably had already had some experience in healing (Luke ix. 6) (although this may have been before the seventy were sent out: Luke x. 1). But in this case they were unsuccessful, and had not only the mortification of failing in their attempt, but were also exposed to the derision of the scribes, their enemies. If they had successfully performed other cures, this result would naturally be a painful disappointment.

A scene of confusion met the eyes of Jesus and his companions. Which of the disciples had attempted the cure is not mentioned; but it could not have been Peter, James, or John. Thomas was not much of a believer in miracles; and, when we consider that Philip's faith seems to have needed some strengthening, and that Judas must have been an element of failure, perhaps it is not strange that the effort was unsuccessful.

It is a particularly interesting story, because of the full and minute detail (the account in Mark is especially graphic), and the truthful character of the whole narrative,—a remarkably vivid and precious piece of history.

A crowd had collected about the poor convulsed boy, the scribes were adding to the confusion by their eager questions; and in their absorption they did not notice Jesus until he had approached quite near. Mark says: "All the multitude, when they saw him, were greatly amazed, and, running to him, saluted him." Probably "amazed" means that they were startled to find him so near, when they had been unconscious of his presence; and they had probably been wishing for his return.

It was not possible now for Jesus to avoid publicity, as he had attempted to do when healing the blind man at Bethesda-Julias. So he came forward, and addressed the scribes, preferring to answer their questions himself.

"What question ye with them?"

One of the multitude, however, interrupted with an eager appeal for help.

"Master, I brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever it taketh him, it dasheth him down: and he foameth and grindeth his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast it out; and they were not able."

Matthew's account says that the father came "kneeling to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is epileptic,* and suffereth grievously; for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft-times into the water."

Luke's account is a little different. He says that the father "cried, saying, Master, I beseech thee to look upon my son; for he is my only child. And, behold, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth; and it hardly departeth from him, bruising him sorely."

Mark's story continues thus: "And he answereth them, and saith: O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him unto me."

Matthew's account adds the word "perverse" ("O faithless and perverse generation." Luke's has the same expression).

The emotion shown by these words reveals to us how much pain Jesus suffered from these repeated disappointments. He was not to be long with the disciples. When he was gone, his work would be left to them. How would it be with them when they no

*"Epileptic" (revised version), not "lunatic," as in the common version.

longer had him to rely upon, and make good their failures?

When the patient was brought to Jesus, "straightway the spirit tare him grievously; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming."

It was natural that all this excitement should cause a severe attack of the disease.

"And he asked his father, How long time is it since this hath come unto him?

"And he said: From a child. And oft-times it hath cast him both into the fire and into the waters to destroy him; but, if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us.

"And Jesus said unto him: If thou canst!* All things are possible to him that believeth.

"Straightway the father of the child cried out, and said, I believe:† help thou mine unbelief.

"And, when Jesus saw that a multitude came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou deaf and dumb spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

"And, having cried out and torn him much, he came out; and the child became as one dead, insomuch that the more part said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him up; and he arose.

"And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately,‡ saying, We could not cast it out. And he said unto them, This kind can come out by nothing save by prayer."§ (Mark.)

Matthew, who may also have been present at the conversation in the house, says that to the question, "Why could not we cast it out?" Jesus answered, "Because of your little faith: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you,"

The revised version places in a note v. 21, "But this kind goeth not out save by prayer and fasting," so that it may have been copied from Mark.

There is an almost inexhaustible treasure of interesting matter in this story. Perhaps the most interesting point of all is the belief of Jesus in regard to the power of faith, and here we may class it with the story of the Roman centurion and of the woman who touched his garment.

Then the personal element: the sorrow and disappointment in regard to his disciples; and the earnest effort to encourage them, with the sad, underlying thought, how soon they would stand alone.

Then the cry of the father, expressing the want of almost every human heart,—for is not this the one desire of the soul?—"Help my unbelief!"

And with these comes the mysterious fact of the power of spirit over matter, which we all, to some extent recognize, and understand so little.

Then the teaching of Jesus of a direct answer to prayer for spiritual force to be used for the good of others. May we believe that such prayers as these are *always* answered? Is this an unfailing spiritual law? And may we rely upon this promise of Jesus for the duties and cares of daily life as well as for great exceptional occasions?

Critics have found it interesting to discuss the question whether Jesus believed in demoniacal possession. That seems a minor point, but everything connected with Jesus is interesting. If his words are here correctly reported, he seems to have shared in this belief. Perhaps he was mistaken in this. Perhaps those who reject this belief are mistaken. We need not undertake to decide.

There was no longer any hope of remaining here in seclusion, and with the disciples Jesus took his way back to Capernaum. They went through Galilee, yet seem to have observed some precautions (Mark ix. 30). On the road he spoke to them of his coming death (Matt. xvii. 22, 23; Mark ix. 31, 32). Matthew says, "They were exceeding sorry"; Mark, "But they understood not the saying, and were afraid to ask him." Both passages speak of his rising "after three days." Was this the thing which they did not understand?

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*The old version gives this passage thus: "*If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*" Long ago Furness gave the translation "*If thou canst!*" now adopted as correct in the revised version. (See "Jesus and his Biographers.")

†Many ancient authorities add "*with tears.*"

‡"Or, *How is it that we could not cast it out?*" *Note, R. V.*

§"Many ancient authorities add *and fasting.*" *Note, R. V.*

It is believed that it was Peter's house which was the home of Jesus in Capernaum, and that he now returned thither with Peter and the other disciples.

L. F. C.

[I venture here to call attention to Furness's extremely interesting little book on "The Power of Spirit."]

Questions on New Testament study will be answered by the Bible Class department, so far as possible. Address Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.*]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be; not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise, she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.— Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated, all* books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

A four-pound package is the most that can be sent by *mail*. The postage on four pounds of *magazines* is 16 cts., on four pounds of *books* 32 cts.

Postage on magazines and all periodicals (weighing less than four pounds), 1 cent for four ounces; on bound books, 1 cent for two ounces. *Paper* books are now sent by mail at the same rate as magazines, *when issued periodically*.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

It is requested that each mother desiring "Gentle Measures in Training the Young" shall write her own request, and also state the number and ages of her children.

Our secretary, Miss Langmaid, has received a *postal card*, dated Sheboygan, Wisconsin, asking her to send "Gentle Measures in Training the Young" to *ten* different persons whose addresses are given. This communication having no signature, she is obliged to take this method of answering, and calls attention to the notice (printed in every number of the *Cheerful Letter*) asking every mother who wishes to receive "Gentle Measures" to write her own request.

It is contrary to our rules to send requests for anything but reading matter. Those who infringe this rule will be dropped from our list.

These books are offered only to those who have not other means of procuring them. Those able to buy, or living in or near a town with a public library, are not invited to send requests.

The following books are offered by the Cambridge Branch. Address Mrs. C. W. Kettell, 3 Brewster Street, Cambridge, Mass. Old correspondents will please address the members to whom they have formerly written. In order to receive books from the Cambridge Branch, it will be necessary henceforth to send a reference with the *first* request.

Mitchell's "Geography"; Cornell's "Intermediate Geography"; Guyot's "Common School Geography"; Franklin's "Written Arithmetic"; Colburn's "First Lessons"; Webster's "Pronouncing Spelling-book"; "New American Pronouncing Speller"; Turner's "Primer and First Reader"; "Pictorial History of England"; "Tales of Ancient Rome"; "Eastern Arts and Antiquities"; Smith's "Illustrated Astronomy"; Tappan's "Elements of Logic"; "Metric System," Davis; "The Young Student,"

Guizot; "The Useful Arts," Bigelow; Mansfield's "Political Manual"; "National Fourth Reader"; "Little Folks in Feathers and Fur"; "Sanford and Merton"; "Faith and Patience"; "Means and Ends"; Dickens's "Little Folks"; "Story of Lafayette"; "Chautauqua Young Folks' Annual"; "Scripture History"; "Life of God in the Soul of Man"; Alexander's "Evidences of Christianity"; "Social and Domestic Religion"; Ephraim Peabody's "Sermons"; Livingstone's "Travels"; "Brazil and the Brazilians"; "A Book about Doctors"; "Quotations from Hawthorne"; "Life of Fredrika Bremer"; "Stepping Heavenward"; "Ships that pass in the Night"; "The Lady of La Garaye," Hon. Mrs. Norton (poem).

Mrs. Agnes Blanchard, Middleburg, Clay County, Florida, offers to exchange for other papers and magazines the following: *Youth's Companion; Century*, 1889; *Scribner's*, 1887; *Harper's*, odd numbers; *Our Little Men and Women*, 1881–1889; *Nursery*, 1881; *Babyland; Harper's Young People*, 1881.

Mayflower for 1896 is offered by Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

Books in loan library of Miss F. H. Curtis, 445 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass.: —

"Society and Solitude," R. W. Emerson; "Standish of Standish," J. G. Austin; "Strange Stories of Louisiana," G. W. Cable; "Sant' Ilario," "Saracinesca," F. M. Crawford; "The Head of a Hundred," edited by M. W. Goodwin; "The Last Essays of Elia," Charles Lamb; "The Cup of Loving Service," E. D. Taylor; "Salmagundi," Washington Irving; "Riverby," John Burroughs; "Rags and Velvet Gowns," A. G. Plympton; "Reveries of a Bachelor," Marvel; "Robinson Crusoe," De Foe; "Romola," George Eliot; "Psychics, Facts and Theories," "Phillips Brooks" (sermon on), M. J. Savage; "Polly Oliver's Problem," Wiggin; "Pride and Prejudice," Jane Austen; "Old Salem," Eleanor Putnam; "No 49 Tinkham Street," C. E. Cheney; "The Bride of Lammermoor," Scott; "The Age of Chivalry," Bulfinch; "The Open Door," Howard; "The Discipline of Sorrow," W. G. Eliot; "Tanglewood Tales," Hawthorne; "The Colonel's Opera Cloak"; "Zoe"; "The Red Eric," R. M. Ballantyne; "Old Curiosity Shop," "Oliver Twist," Dickens; "Little Men," Alcott; "The Boyhood of Great Painters"; "Two Pilgrims," Tolstoï; "Queens of the Air," Ruskin; "Old and New View of the Hereafter" (sermon), J. F. Clarke; "The Golden Rule in Business," C. F. Dole; "The Wayside Inn," Longfellow; "Newport," G. P. Lathrop; "Not Angels Quite," N. H. Dole; "Man's Knowledge of God," R. A. Armstrong; "Mary Stuart and the Maid of Orleans," A. Swanwick; "Mr. Picket Rin and his Friends," Price Collier; "Massachusetts History and its Historians," C. F. Adams; "Lucy Larcom" (Life, Letters, and Diary); "John Halifax, Gentleman"; "In Old New England," Butterworth; "In Camp and Field," Taylor; "Hope Leslie"; "History of Nantucket," Macy; "Hiram Golf's Religion," Burton; "Fred, Maria, and Me"; "Following the Guidon," Mrs. Custer; "Daughters of the American Revolution," C. C. Coffin; "Daylight Land," W. H. H. Murray; "Construction of the United States," J. S. Hart; "Cleopatra," Ebers; "At the North of Bearcamp Waters," Frank Bolles; "Afternoon Side," M. E. Bolles; "Adam Bede"; "A Woman of Shawmut," Carpenter.

The following books are offered by Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass :—

"Our New Mistress," Yonge; "Life of George Washington," Henley; "Lays of Ancient Rome," Macaulay; "The Dove in the Eagle's Nest," Yonge; "Hyperion," Longfellow; "Heroes and Hero-worship," Carlyle; "The Lady of the Lake," Scott; "Uncle Tom's Cabin"; "The Thought of God" (religious poems); "Cranford"; "Rosamond," Maria Edgeworth; "Jan of the Windmill," J. H. Ewing; "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea," Jules Verne; "Donovan" and "We Two," Edna Lyall; "A Great Emergency," "Six to Sixteen," "Lob-lie-by-the-Fire," Ewing; "Poetical Works," Proctor; "Knight Errant," Lyall; "The Chaplet of Pearls," Yonge; "Life of Charles Sumner," Dawes; "Lances of Lynwood," Yonge; "Thoughts that Breathe," Dean Stanley; "Mademoi-

selle Ixe," L. Falconer; "A Peep at Number Five," H. Trusta; "Old Lady Mary," Mrs. Oliphant; "A Little Pilgrim," Mrs. Oliphant; "The Story of Ida"; "Tour of the World in Eighty Days," Verne; Queechy"; "The Wide Wide World"; "Henrietta's Wish"; "The Heir of Redclyffe."

REQUESTS.

READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING.

Libraries.

Standing requests for libraries from: —

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Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Cayuta, Schuyler County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

The Book Club secretary ventures to suggest that, if all those who are *able* to pay postage on the books for which they ask would do so, they would probably themselves receive more books, without mentioning the advantage to others unable to pay postage.

The following young people have written letters in response to the request in *The Cheerful Letter*: —

CALLIE SMITH, 13, Compton, Oklahoma.

BERTHA M. MINGOS, 17, Independence, Allegany County, New York.

BERNICE A. BAILEY, 13, Rough Creek, Virginia.

ANNA WAKEFIELD, 17(?), Cleveland, Le Sueur County, Minnesota.

EDDIE WRIGHT, 14, Marshfield, Missouri. Care of Mrs. M. J. Blaser.

LILLIE BELLE CLARNO, 14, Hermann, Lane County, Oregon. Care of Mrs. Harriet Clarno.

A friend of the Cheerful Letter Exchange has now offered to send a book to each of these young people. We hope to have more letters, and wonder whether the writers understand that by this means they are more likely to receive the books they desire.

N.B.—Make your letters *short*. Two pages of note-paper are all that is desirable.

Would any one be so kind as to send me the following books and magazines? I wish to give them to people who live in this country who are not able to buy them.

Woman's Journal, *Harper's Magazine*, Longfellow's "Evangeline," "Three Thousand Test Examples in Arithmetic," "Lover or Friend," *Ladies' Home Journal*, "Courtship of Miles Standish," "Life of Dean Stanley," Harkness's "Latin Grammar," "Mental Philosophy."

Address Miss Sallie Haynes, Young Harris, Towns County, Georgia.

Will some one send *Harper's Monthly* to Mrs. H. Krieger, La Junta, Colorado? Mrs. Krieger and family have received it for a time, and miss it very much.

Mrs. Roy Thompson, White Mound, Texas, would like *Youth's Companion* or *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Miss Mary H. Pittenger, Art, Clay County, Indiana, will be grateful if some one will send her Wilson's "Fifth Reader," McGuffey's "Sixth," and Underwood's "Hand-book of English Literature."

Mrs. Nora R. Colley, Aspen Wall, Virginia, would like to thank the kind friend who has been sending her *The Cheerful Letter*. She certainly appreciates it. She would like very much for some one to send her a fashion sheet monthly and some pictures or something to amuse her baby boy.

I am a widow with two children, one fourteen and one sixteen. We are more than commonly lonely, as we are herding our neighbors' cattle. We must travel over sixty miles with them down to the Indian country, where pastures are good. Our only home until next January will be the wagon box; but we are very glad to go, as in return the farmers furnish our food and do our farm work. We would not be so lonely if we could have some reading and some school-books for the children to study. Would like to have a work on civil government, physiology, and a dictionary for my son. My girl and I like to read stories, magazines, or anything that we can read and talk over. We can get anything sent, as they send out supplies every two weeks. Mrs. Annie T. Hughes, Waterloo, Oklahoma.

I am fourteen years old. We live in a remote place. No church or Sunday-school near, for which I am sorry, as I like to go very much. I work on a farm. Cannot go to school, as we are poor. We got "Uncle Tom's Cabin" through *The Cheerful Letter*. I am an orphan; live with Mettie J. Blaser, who is like a mother to me. I like histories, stories, school papers, and books. I would like the *Youth's Companion*. Eddie Wright, Marshfield, Missouri. Care of Mrs. Mettie J. Blaser.

I live in the Indian Territory, entirely cut off from society, church, and school, and would be very glad to receive reading matter. I have four children, two large enough to go to school, and would be glad to get some book to teach them at home. I would like to have a correspondent. Mrs. M. C. Andrews, Ryan, Indian Territory.

I should be very grateful to any one who would send me old numbers of good periodicals (magazines?) or the *Youth's Companion;* but I cannot pay postage. I would like something for my little boy of eleven. Mrs. Anna Cochran, North Platte, Nebraska.

To Miss Sarah F. Duncan, Mrs. T. S. Beard, and others: Your letters with requests should have gone to the Book Club. The letters of writers who do not observe this simple rule (and have had ample opportunity to learn it) are in some cases postponed, in others omitted.

I have several correspondents who would like to receive the *Christian Register* regularly. Will any one who is willing to send current numbers (weekly or almost every week) kindly let me know, and I will furnish the addresses. Write to L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass. (until September 30).

We live away back here in the mountains. Our place is a canyon, a narrow strip of land with the high, rough mountains on all sides. The mountains are covered with thick brush and large old dead trees. We have to clear the brush and trees off of all the land we have; and it takes a good while and a big lot of hard work, and the land is not very good after it is cleared. There is some spots that nothing will grow on. Our garden this year is a complete failure. I don't know what we shall do when winter comes. There is eight of us children. Our papa died last summer. My oldest brother has to work, and support the rest of us. His name is Ralph Roy. He was eighteen this spring. We think him the best brother in all the world. He works hard for us all the time, and never thinks of himself. He worked all summer, and never bought a thing for himself but a pair of shoes and a pair of overalls. Everything else that he earns comes home to keep the pot boiling. He was thrown from a load of hay, and had his wrist crushed dreadful, and his arm broken in two places. His arm has withered away till it is not near half as large as the other one, and there is some pieces of broken bones in his wrist that keep it sore and tender all the time. The next one to him is Louisa. She was sixteen this spring, but she is so very, very small,—not much larger than a child of eight, and very delicate. It is hard for her to walk. There is but little that she can do. Bennie will be twelve this fall, and Willie was nine this spring. They are both pretty good boys to work. They get all the wood for the fireplace and stove. They take the cross-cut saw, and can saw up some big logs, and split them up into wood, if there are not too many knots in them. The next one is Hermann. He is six. Next is Alice Ruth. Last is baby Priscilla. She will be the great age of two the 27th of October. We think her the sweetest and prettiest baby in all the world.

We are nearly four miles from the post-office. Hermann is no place at all, only a small house where the mail is kept. One pony brings the mail and the mail-carrier. It is our greatest pleasure to get the mail, and to wonder if there is anything for us. Eugene City is the nearest town of any size, and where there is a railroad; and that is seventy-five miles. We do not have any church or Sunday-school. Mamma is teaching us at home all she can. Lou would like to have a Barnes's "Fourth Reader and Spelling-book." Mamma reads aloud to us in the long winter evenings, when we have anything interesting to read. Brother Roy loves books so much, and has always wanted to get an education, but has never had a chance: he has always had to work hard. He would like so much to have Wood's "Book of Natural History," "Boys at Chequasset," and Mrs. Custer's "Boots and Saddles" and "Following the Guidon." But he will be so thankful for any kind of good books. He reads all the spare time he has in the winter, and tries to study some, but is nearly always too tired. Last winter we had the "World at the Fireside" and "Some Strange Corners of our Country," "Swiss Family Robinson" and "Black Beauty." We never get tired of hearing mamma read the two last books. I can't begin to tell how many times she has read them to us. Sister Lou wants me to ask if any one will send her some of Mrs. Whitney's books or Margaret Sidney's Pepper books. I have Miss Alcott's "Little Men," and that makes me want some more of her books. Mamma has written to some who offer books, but we live so far away that the books are always gone before they get her letter. Lillie Belle Clarno, age fourteen last May, Care of Mrs. Harriet Clarno, Hermann, Lane County, Oregon.

I am a young girl eighteen years of age, and have been confined to my bed two years and a half; but now I am able to be up and walk about the house, and go driving and visiting some. I live on a farm, and have both father and mother, and have two brothers,—Willie, age sixteen, Georgie, ten, two sisters, Lelia, age twenty-eight, Amy, eight. Georgie is very fond of reading, and reads a great deal. I do not go to school, as I am not able to, and do not study at home. I am not receiving any periodicals at present through *The Cheerful Letter*. There are two churches three miles from here, and one five miles away we attend when we go. We have a district school two miles from here. Georgie and Amy are going to that now. I do not care to correspond with any one, as I have as many as I can write to now. My favorite books are Rosa Carey's, Louisa M. Alcott's, *St. Nicholas*, and E. P. Roe's. I would like to receive "Our Bessie," or any others excepting "Esther," "Uncle Max," and "Wooed and Married," as I have them. Reading sent to me is read by a number of other people, as I lend some and give away some. My father and mother's names are William and Charlotte Ballou. Papa is in poor health, so Willie and Georgie have to do most of the work. Anna C. Ballou, North Tunbridge, Orange County, Vermont.

My name is Cassie Waugh, and I am twelve years old. We live in a large brick house on the top of a high hill, right in sight of James River, in Amherst County, Virginia. I have three sisters, Myrtle, aged eleven, Agnes, four, and Anne, three. I have three brothers. Pembroke is nine, Carter eight, and Ashby five. We have very few neighbors; but we have churches within three miles which we usually attend in summer. We are very convenient to both the railroad and the post-office. I am very fond of reading, and read anything I can get, especially tales of adventure. My father's address is Mr. A. G. Waugh, Waugh Post-office, Virginia.

Sept. 3, 1896.

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

A WORD TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE.

The editor has been much gratified by one feature of our correspondence. Many of our young friends speak of a desire for education, and often ask for school-books as well as stories,—sometimes in preference to stories.

Now, girls and boys, there is one thing which will help you very much, and nothing that any one else can do will be of half so

much service to you. It is to show that you are doing all you can for your education by the means you already possess. Every one feels interested in boys and girls who are exerting themselves.

There are two accomplishments which are within your reach already,—*spelling* and *writing*. If you have any book at all, you can learn to spell correctly; and those who have paper or writing-books can learn one of the most useful and important of all accomplishments,—writing a good hand. Ten minutes a day practice in writing will produce this result. But, of course, it must be slow, careful practice: scribbling and scratching is of no use.

Lately the editor saw a letter written by a girl of thirteen or fourteen to a member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange. She spelled the word "*they*" "*tha*" six or eight times. At the end of her letter, a very long one, she said, "Please excuse bad spelling." But is such very bad spelling excusable in a girl who has had several books from the Cheerful Letter Exchange? How many times has she *read* the word "they"?

In one letter a young girl misspelled the names of two of her own sisters; and we frequently see letters where "there" is spelled "thare," "possible" "possiable," and "i" is used for "I."

Now, cannot most of you spend a few minutes each day in one or both of these very important studies? The best way is to combine them. Take a word which you have misspelled, and write it slowly and carefully over and over again. Make *every letter* as perfect as you can,—large, round, and clear.

And, in writing to your friends of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, make your note a writing and spelling lesson. Do not hastily scramble off anything, and then say, "Excuse bad writing and spelling." Make the writing and spelling good, and they will not have to be excused. Look up the words of which you feel any doubt; and, if you really have the desire to improve, you will be likely to make more progress in one year than many a young person who has had the best schools and teachers, but has not made any real exertion.

We shall have more to say on this subject by and by. Your friend,

THE EDITOR.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

ANAGRAM.

I.

Where a limpid streamlet —— its banks
In the —— of old Cashmere,
I met an Eastern traveller,
Who'd had a fall severe.
Having a well-known —— with me,
I gave it his —— to apply:
Then, with friendly —— and God-speed,
We passed each other by.
(Five letters.)

ANAGRAMS ON NAMES OF NOTED MEN.

I lead, sir.
Won half the New World's glory.
Fans one tenderly.
Robust hero yet.
A long peal, read.
G. leads not.
Cheer sick lands.

II.

My *first* a useful vessel is for holding food;
My *next* is all men's lot, both bad and good;
My *third* doth history's framework keep in place;
My *whole* aspires to rise above his mates
As President of these United States.

S. F. C.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN AUGUST NUMBER.

Anagrams.

1. Arts, star, tars, rats.

2. Aster, tares, tears, stare, rates.

3. Trifling, rifling, I fling, fling.

[There was an error in the second line of No. 1. It should read: "Ranks the study of orb and star."]

(The editor would be glad to receive the answers to the charades in August number from the friend who sent them. They have unfortunately been mislaid.)

Some of the letters received this month from our young people are written so beautifully it is quite a pleasure to read them. A clear handwriting is a most valuable accomplishment, and with a little exertion almost every one can acquire it. Shall we take this as our aim this winter?

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, October 2, and Friday, November 6, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

All interested in this work are cordially invited to be present.

After October 15 the address of our treasurer, Miss Howe, will be changed from Box 21, Nahant, Mass., to 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass. Subscriptions may be sent to her or left for her at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, at any season.

After October 1 the address of the editor will be Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Will any minister who receives this paper do us the favor to send to our secretary names of lonely people living in places remote from schools, libraries, and churches, especially mothers living on ranches or prairies, young people without means of education, and invalids, whether grown-up people or children.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE: —

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

Our Book Club department has grown so large that we shall ask of all who in the future write to us for books to send the name of some minister as a reference,— when possible, the minister of the church to which they belong.

We fear that some of our subscribers have the impression that by subscribing for *The Cheerful Letter* they will be sure to receive books. The Book Club has proved an attractive department of our paper; and many of our subscribers are interested in sending books to those who are unable otherwise to obtain them. But we engage only to keep the Book Club open for offers and requests, and that under certain conditions.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

N.B.—PLEASE READ DIRECTIONS AT BEGINNING OF BOOK CLUB BEFORE WRITING FOR BOOKS.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR OF "CHEERFUL LETTER,"—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Many of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.

Notice that requests for membership and for correspondents go to Miss Langmaid, our secretary; requests for books and offers of books, to Mrs. Nichols; and to Miss Clarke only articles for insertion in the paper (not Book Club matter). All such material should be written on *one side only* of the paper, and sent by the first of the month *before* that in which it is printed.